



Commission on Improving the Status of Children in Indiana

Recommendation to the Commission

Party Submitting Recommendation: Child Safety and Services Task Force, Sub-Committee on Child Abuse Prevention

Date of Submission: 8/15/2018

Type of Action Requested:

Legislation Policy Resolution of Support or Endorsement Public Promotion

Other: _____

Which of the Commission's Strategic Priorities does this Recommendation help advance:

Child Safety and services Juvenile Justice and Cross-system Youth
 Mental Health and Substance Abuse Educational Outcomes

Summary of Recommendation:

First, to determine the need for a statewide child abuse prevention framework, we are requesting that all agencies or entities who work in any capacity with children and families, and who currently have any type of statewide strategic plan, action plan, or framework, provide our Task Force with their respective plans so that we may determine if there is a need for Indiana to create a more comprehensive, statewide plan for the prevention of child maltreatment.

Second, in order to improve awareness to both service providers and the community of existing prevention resources around the state, we recommend increased marketing of our summary of prevention resources, as well as increased knowledge around how to access them. This action will hopefully make us more aware of gaps and duplications, and will expand providers' (including 211 Connect 2Help) knowledge so that information can reach the children and families whom they serve.

Background of Recommendation:

What is the need or problem?

In 2013 and 2014, Indiana averaged 25,677 substantiated reports of child maltreatment annually. For SFYs' 2015, 2016, and 2017, Indiana averaged 32,710 substantiated reports of child maltreatment, an increase of over 7,000 substantiated reports. In terms of non-relative foster placements, we averaged 4,771 children in care between the years of 2012 through 2014. In 2015 through 2017, we averaged 6,469 children in care. Placement in relative care is even more startling. In the years consisting of 2012 through 2014, we averaged 4,030 children in relative care. Between the years consisting of 2015 through 2017, we averaged 7,208. This number does not even capture the numbers of relatives who are currently caring for their relative children who have not come to the attention of DCS. Further, we are currently 10th

in the nation with regard to infant mortality. Not all mortality is associated with maltreatment, but there are issues, such as abusive head trauma and unsafe sleep practices, that are attributable.

What is the current response to the problem by the State of Indiana?

Indiana has numerous prevention programs for families, especially if we expand the definition of prevention to include Early Childhood Programs, programs that provide financial assistance, Home Visiting, Education and Awareness Programs, Food and Nutrition Programs, workforce development and statewide crisis and Information and Referral lines. A more complete list, with descriptions, is attached to this report. Many of these programs have also created their own action and/or strategic plans around how to provide resources to the populations whom they serve.

What is the recommender proposing, and how will it help solve the problem?

First, the subcommittee considered recommending the development of an Indiana statewide child abuse prevention plan, or framework. However as the sub-committee has been exploring this idea, we have learned that many state agencies and other statewide entities already have their own plans, be they strategic, action, or more framework in nature. Prior to our commencing with the recommendation of any type of large scale prevention framework, we would ask that this Commission support our request that all agencies whose focus is children and families, and who have some type of statewide plan or framework, provide that plan to our Task Force so that we may determine if there is already a solid foundation upon which we can build. This initial action will:

- 1. Connect us with other entities that already have statewide plans or frameworks*
- 2. Provide us with the ability to explore model programs that are already being used for families*

The second component we are proposing involves increasing community and provider awareness of current prevention resources available around the state. Several of us in the field of child abuse prevention had been hearing, anecdotally, that a number of service providers appear to be unaware of many of the resources available in the state for children and families. There has been the concern of “siloeing”, and that providers may lack awareness of what types of services are being provided. Our subcommittee compiled a list of prevention resources and we recommend that it be shared with Indiana 211 as we recognize that this is the largest database of resources for the community and one that can be readily accessed by all. We also welcome other suggestions for spreading access to this list from the CISC.

What data, research or other information did the recommender consult to formulate this proposal?

With regard to our requesting access to existing plans, we have noted that other entities, such as some areas within the Federal Government (the CDC and Title IV E for instance) are beginning to recognize the importance of statewide plans and frameworks. In fact, the CDC in one of its most recent RFP's, required a statewide child abuse prevention plan prior to an agency being able to apply for funding. Further, statewide child abuse prevention plans have been a recommended policy of Prevent Child Abuse America for years. With all this information, completing, or building upon, a comprehensive statewide framework around the prevention of child maltreatment appears to be best practice. By reviewing plans already in existence, we will be able to determine if there is a plan that is already fairly comprehensive and can be built upon to be more inclusive of child abuse prevention. If after review however, we determine that there is not a plan that comprehensively articulates Indiana's strategy for child abuse prevention, then we will recommend the creation of a statewide plan around prevention.

With regard to our second request, increase knowledge of existing resources, we distributed an informal survey to over 800 people around the state, most of whom were service providers. We received over 220 completed surveys, and the

data did show that many of those who completed the survey were not aware of several of the statewide resources for children and families. We asked at the end of the survey for input on additional resources that we had not included on the survey, and several more were included that were missed in our original, and what we thought to be comprehensive, list of resources. We also had a meeting with the central Indiana branch of Connect2Help (211), the statewide resource and referral line, and showed them several pages of prevention services we had accumulated, and there were services listed that they did not have included in their data base. While it's understandable that not every resource will be known, especially if the resource is specific to a community, there was also a lack of awareness of some resources that were considered to be statewide, or at least had a presence in several communities. Needs assessments, data analytics, and other more qualitative methods have also been used by other entities in attempts to measure what gaps there may be in resources.

If a legislative request, cite the current relevant code and specify what change is being recommended.

N/A

If a policy request, cite the current relevant policy and specify what change is being recommended.

N/A

If the recommendation involves an endorsement or public promotion of a specific initiative or statement, attach the document of which you are seeking the Commission's support/endorsement/promotion.

First, we are asking that this Commission endorse our request that all agencies whose focus is children and families, and who have some type of statewide plan or framework, provide that plan to our Task Force so that we may determine if there is a need for a more comprehensive statewide framework around the prevention of child maltreatment, or if there is an existing plan upon which we can build a child abuse prevention framework.

Second, with the CISC's endorsement, we will be providing Connect 2Help 211 information about our survey results, as well providing them with any documents that list prevention resources to ensure they have these services in their data base. We will also be communicating survey results with those agencies who registered lower awareness by others so that they may make informed decisions around marketing their resources. Having additional awareness may also aid providers in understanding where there may be gaps in services, as well as where there may be duplications. If the Commission can provide any additional ideas as to how best to increase the knowledge of service providers about existing resources, especially statewide resources, it would be appreciated.